



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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**NEWS SUMMARY:** Robert Hawpetoss Convicted by Federal Jury of Child Sexual Assault

On June 22, 2005, a jury in Federal Court in Green Bay, Wisconsin convicted Robert Michael Hawpetoss, (DOB: 4/4/1940) of eight counts of sexual abuse. This case was tried before the Honorable William C. Griesebach, federal district court judge, Green Bay Division.

Five victims, ranging in age from 14 years to 41 years, testified about the sexual abuse they suffered at the hands of Hawpetoss.

Hawpetoss was convicted of attempting to sexually assault a minor under the age of 12 years. This charge stemmed from an attempt by Hawpetoss to pull an eight year old girl into the woods on Max Martin road on the Menominee Indian Reservation in September of 1999 in an attempt to sexually assault her. The young girl was able to break free from Hawpetoss' grasp. She ran approximately two miles to a highway where two cars stopped to help her. Three citizen witnesses testified that they noticed the young girl running in a very remote area where it is not typical to see anyone, much less a young child. After taking the child to her home, the Menominee Tribal police were contacted. A search was conducted in the area of Max Martin road in an attempt to locate Hawpetoss. A canine was used in the search but lost the scent in the marsh. It took more than five years to locate and arrest Hawpetoss. In January, 2002, Hawpetoss was arrested in Oregon but provided a false name, Gerome Calvin Biddel. It took Oregon police officers more than 9 hours to obtain Hawpetoss' fingerprints as he continued to fight their efforts to fingerprint him. Hawpetoss, unfortunately, was released prior to his true identity being discovered. He was apprehended by the Oneida Tribal police on December 5, 2004.

Hawpetoss was also convicted for the sexual abuse of two children. These incidents of assault took place from 1985 through 1993. The victims, now adults, testified to the ongoing sexual abuse by Hawpetoss over many years. They also testified Hawpetoss told them he would kill them if they ever told anyone of the sexual abuse.

In addition the testimony of the charged victims, the jury heard from two additional victims Hawpetoss had assaulted in the mid-seventies. One testified that in approximately 1973, Hawpetoss sexually assaulted him on two occasions. Another testified that in approximately 1975, Hawpetoss sexually assaulted him on two occasions. These incidents were beyond the statute of limitations but they were allowed to testify to show Hawpetoss' propensity to commit sexual acts against young children. One boy had been threatened with a knife by Hawpetoss to remain silent.

Hawpetoss will be sentenced by Judge Griesebach on October 6, 2005, at 1:30 p.m. in federal court in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Hawpetoss is facing the possibility of life imprisonment.

This case was investigated by the FBI in Green Bay, Wisconsin with the assistance of the Menominee Tribal Police Department and the Menominee Sheriff's Department. This case was prosecuted by the United States Attorney's office Eastern District of Wisconsin by Assistant United States Attorneys Penny Fleming and Carol L. Kraft.

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